

1. Requested Motion:

Meeting Date: May 20, 2013

Motion to approve a letter of support for the MPO TIGER V grant application.

Why the action is necessary: To demonstrate community support for the MPIO grant application

What the action accomplishes:

Enables the MPO to put forth an application with a stronger basis for approval.

2. Agenda:

☒ Consent
☐ Administrative

3. Requirement/Purpose:

Resolution
☐ Ordinance
☒ Other

4. Submitter of Information:

☐ Council
☒ Town Staff
☐ Town Attorney

5. Background:


The TIGER V grant application is for the next round of federal TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery). It is a competitive national grant program.

It provides for an interconnected corridor of biking and walking facilities from fort Myers to FGCU that is then linked to collier county by transit.

6. Alternative Action: Deny letter of support

7. Management Recommendations: Approve letter of support

8. Recommended Approval:

Town Manager	Town Attorney	Finance Director	Public Works Director	Community Development Director	Parks & Recreation Director	Town Clerk
						

9. Council Action:

☐ Approved ☐ Denied ☐ Deferred ☐ Other

Terry Stewart

From: Darla Letourneau <dletourneau@bikewalklee.org>
Sent: Friday, May 03, 2013 2:54 PM
To: Alan Mandel; Terry Stewart
Cc: 'dscott'; 'Darla Letourneau'
Subject: Request for letter of support for Lee MPO's TIGER V grant application: Complete Streets Initiative
Attachments: DraftFMBIttrsupport130503.doc; TIGERAttachment130503.docx

Mayor Mandel,

I am writing to ask that the Town Council of Fort Myers Beach, or you as Mayor, submit a letter of support for the Lee MPO's TIGER V Complete Streets Initiative grant application.

At the April 2013 Lee MPO Board meeting, the Board agreed to resubmit its Complete Streets Initiative grant application for the latest competitive round of federal TIGER grants (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery). This is a highly competitive national grant program (only about 5% of applications in each round have been funded) which funds innovative multi-modal transportation projects, with a focus on creating livable communities. The Lee MPO has submitted this application for two previous TIGER rounds (TIGER III and IV) and although our application wasn't funded, our application ranked highly and we were encouraged to resubmit our application for future TIGER rounds. So we're hoping that the third time is the charm, as it was for Tampa's Riverwalk Project that was funded by TIGER in its 3rd try.

The Lee MPO's TIGER V grant application (an updated and enhanced version of our TIGER III and IV applications) requests \$10.5 million for a Complete Streets Initiative, creating an alternative transportation mode network that includes the construction of pathways, bike lanes, sidewalks, bus shelters and sidewalk connections, way-finding signs, bike parking, and bicycle/pedestrian intersection improvements to connect up and close the gaps, as envisioned in the MPO's bicycle pedestrian master plan adopted in 2011. The result would be a connected corridor of biking and walking facilities from downtown Fort Myers down to FGCU and then linked to Collier County by transit. The grant request is for \$10.5 million with a match of \$2.8 million (of current non-federal money), for a total project cost of \$13.3 million.

For the previous TIGER applications, Town Manager Terry Stewart submitted a letter of support on behalf of the Town. (See this letter in the package of letters that was submitted with the October 2011 application: http://www.bikewalklee.org/BWL_PDFs/Resources/TIGER%20III%20letters%20BWL.pdf). USDOT officials have recommended that we get new letters of support from local and state elected bodies and officials and from our congressional delegation, since demonstrating strong support from elected officials is needed to be competitive.

BikeWalkLee is assisting the Lee MPO staff in gathering these letters of support, which must be packaged with the application. **Attached is a draft letter for your consideration** (I've taken a stab at updating the Town's letter submitted in 2011, but it's simply a suggestion.) **These letters must be signed and submitted as a PDF attachment by Monday, May 20th to Don Scott, MPO Director (dscott@leempo.com) and cc: Darla Letourneau (dletourneau@bikewalklee.org).**

Also attached is a fact sheet on the TIGER V grant proposal and its potential benefits.

Once the grant application has been submitted on June 2nd, I hope that we can count on your assistance to provide active and ongoing verbal support and advocacy for this application to our Congressional delegation and USDOT officials until grant selections are made.

Thanks for your assistance and ongoing support. If you have any questions, please contact me.

FORT MYERS BEACH DRAFT (5/3/13: djl)

use city letterhead

Date:

Honorable Ray LaHood
United States Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: TIGER V Grant Application--Lee MPO Complete Streets Initiative

Dear Secretary LaHood:

The Town of Fort Myers Beach wholeheartedly endorses the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) application for TIGER V funding of its Complete Streets Initiative, tied to the MPO's Countywide Bicycle pedestrian Master Plan.

This grant proposal embraces an alternative transportation mode network that will integrate and connect a bicycle, pedestrian and public transit network. This network includes the construction of pathways, bike lanes, sidewalks, bus shelters and sidewalk connections, way-finding signs, bike parking, and bicycle/pedestrian intersection improvements to connect up, close the gaps, as envisioned in the MPO's bike/ped master plan. The result would be a connected corridor of biking and walking facilities from downtown Fort Myers south to Florida Gulf Coast University and then linked to Collier County by transit.

Lee County is a major tourist destination, especially its beach communities, with Fort Myers Beach being one of the most visited destinations. With high volumes of pedestrian, bicycle, and trolley traffic, we are committed to improving our bike/ped facilities to make them safer and more accessible for all our users. We are currently working in partnership with the County on a major road improvement project on Estero Blvd, our "main street", to make it significantly more pedestrian/bicycle/transit-friendly. The Town is proud of its North Estero Blvd. complete streets project completed in 2011, which has been touted as a model complete street. Having a safe and connected countywide biking and walking network will allow the County to develop an eco-tourism focus, bringing much needed revenues to small businesses and the tourism industry.

With this grant application, the bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Fort Myers Beach will link up with the Bi-County segment in Bonita Springs, allowing users to connect up with the countywide system via the bike lanes and sidewalks on Hickory Blvd. and Bonita Beach Rd, which intersect with the Bi-County segment at US 41.

The MPO's Complete Streets Initiative proposal would make a significant positive impact on our community. We urge you to approve the MPO's application to help us enhance our transportation network for all users.

Sincerely,

Town Council,
or Mayor